



***United States Attorney  
Southern District of New York***

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**U.S. CHARGES FORMER NYC HOUSING AUTHORITY EMPLOYEE  
AND REAL ESTATE AGENT WITH THEFT FROM A FEDERALLY-  
FUNDED PROGRAM**

JAMES B. COMEY, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation, announced today that CHARLES W. BROWN, a former Property Manager with the New York City Housing Authority's ("NYCHA") Department of Facility Planning, and RAYMOND WILLIAMS, a real estate agent, were arrested today and charged in Manhattan federal court with theft from a federally-funded program.

According to the Complaint, in July 2000, BROWN, with the assistance of WILLIAMS, leased city-owned property managed by NYCHA to a Harlem shopkeeper (the "Shopkeeper") and kept the Shopkeeper's monthly rental payments for themselves. The Shopkeeper allegedly paid BROWN and WILLIAMS over \$17,000 for the lease for the Shop during the period of September 2000 through September 2002.

The NYCHA receives subsidies and other forms of funding from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development for administering federal low-income housing programs.

According to the Complaint, in late 1999 or early 2000, the Shopkeeper, who was interested in obtaining a lease to open a variety store, was introduced to WILLIAMS. WILLIAMS eventually allegedly offered to lease the Shopkeeper space in a building managed by NYCHA, located at 645 Lenox Avenue, New York, N.Y. ("the Shop"). WILLIAMS thereafter provided the Shopkeeper with a purportedly legitimate five-year lease for the property from NYCHA, the Complaint charges. The lease, however, unlike legitimately-issued NYCHA leases, was allegedly signed only by the Shopkeeper, not by any official from NYCHA.

Before the Shopkeeper signed the lease for the Shop, he allegedly went to see it with WILLIAMS and BROWN and during this site visit, BROWN was introduced to the Shopkeeper as a "manager."

According to the Complaint, the property containing the Shop remained on NYCHA's inventory of property list, which lists all vacant, city-owned property in public housing developments, after the start date of the lease and remains on the property list at present, although the Shopkeeper has occupied the property continuously since in or about July 2000.

Although the Shopkeeper initially made his rental

payments to WILLIAMS, he eventually started providing his payments directly to BROWN, the Complaint charges.

If convicted, BROWN and WILLIAMS each face a maximum sentence of ten years in jail and the greater of a \$250,000 fine or twice the gross gain or loss resulting from the crime.

BROWN, 37, lives in Montclair, New Jersey.

WILLIAMS, 67, lives in Palisades Park, New Jersey.

BROWN and WILLIAMS are scheduled to be presented before a United States Magistrate Judge DEBRA C. FREEMAN this afternoon.

Mr. COMEY praised the investigative efforts of the New York City Department of Investigation, and thanked the United States Postal Inspection Service and the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Inspector General for their assistance with this case.

Assistant United States Attorney MARGARET A. CIEPRISZ is in charge of the prosecution.

The charges contained in the Complaint are merely accusations, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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